AN

ELEGY

TO THE

MEMORY

OF THE

RIGHT HONOURABLE

WILLIAM, late EARL of BATH.

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THIS

PIECE

IS

INSCRIBED

TO SUCH

MEMBERS of the MINORITY,

AS ARE ACTUATED BY A

REAL SOLICITUDE

FOR THE

WELFARE OF THE PUBLIC.

BY,

Their moſt obedient

Humble Servant,

The Author.

ELEGY,

TO THE

MEMORY

OF THE

RIGHT HONOURABLE

WILLIAM, late EARL of BATH.

I.

SAY, when the wiſe, the dignify'd, and high
Submit to fate's inexorable doom,
Shall no kind anguiſh ſwell the friendly eye,
Nor drop one pious off'ring on the tomb?

II.

Ere this ſome vot'ry of poetic fame
'Twas thought, o BATH! had kindled into fire,
And wreath'd a deathleſs chaplet for thy name
Around the muſe's conſecrated lyre.

III.

Yet this dead ſilence which the muſe diſplays
From friendſhip's ſelf may poſſibly ariſe;
Since all, though bound to wonder and to praiſe,
Are bound alike to pity and deſpiſe.

IV.

O that DEATH's dread and everlaſting pauſe,
In black oblivion might enwrap thy name,
So that the loſs of honour and applauſe
Could waſh away thy baſeneſs and thy ſhame!

V.

But truth, alas! will ruſh beyond the grave,
And drag the mightieſt to the face of morn,
Dwell on each act that indicates the ſlave,
And hang it up to never-ending ſcorn.

'Tis

VI.

'Tis then, no bawd of overbearing times,
Howe'er entrench'd in ermine, or in pow'r,
Can ſtrain her honeſt dictates into crimes,
Nor legal ruffian haul her to the tow'r;

VII.

'Tis then, no daſtard verdict ſhe can hear,
On ſome tame jury villainouſly ſtole,
Nor dread a ſentence faſten'd on their fear,
Repugnant wholly to their ſenſe and ſoul.

VIII.

Had the white angel of the ſtrictly juſt,
At one nice period, PULTNEY, interpos'd,
And kindly ſnatch'd thee headlong into duſt,
How bright a race of glory hadſt thou clos'd!

IX.

Then, at thy mention, the big drop would ſtart,
And teach each nobler ſentiment to burn;
All BRITAIN then had ſcrew'd thee to her heart,
And pour'd immortal ſorrows on thy urn.

X.

The nameleſs magic on thy voice which hung
Had then ſwell'd up our moſt exalted rhymes,
And the rich thunders of thy wondrous tongue
Roll'd on impetuous to the lateſt times.

XI.

Turn back, o memory! if thou canſt, nor gaze
Where poor ambition's paltry-minded breath
Could blaſt the harveſt of ſo bright a praiſe,
And chill each rip'ning dignity to death.

Throw

XII.

Throw ſome Olympus, fancy, on the thought,
Nor let the burſting ſentiment diſcloſe,
That patriot PULTNEY ever could be bought
To ſcreen the deadlieſt of his country's foes.

XIII.

That he, the godlike guardian of the ſtate,
Who ſtill purſu'd where'er the villain fled,
Could baſely ſtoop and ſnatch him from his fate
When hung with honeſt horrors o'er his head.

XIV.

And ſtoop—for what?—Perdition catch the ſound,
And blaſt it inſtant, with the worſt deſpair!
A word which truth, in ev'ry age, has found
Compos'd as much of infamy as air.

XV.

Search the long liſt of nobles on record,
Since empire firſt or dignity began,
And mark how few were honour'd with MY LORD,
Who grac'd the humbler epithet of MAN.

XVI.

In nature's earlier and exalted ſtate
On ſure foundations all diſtinction ſtood;
Whoe'er had worth, of conſequence, was great,
And he was ſelf-ennobl'd, that was — GOOD.

XVII.

No ſtar then glitter'd on the breaſt of ſhame,
No ſordid knave was purpled o'er with ſtrings;
'Twas worth that mark'd a ſubject with a name,
And not the wild capricioufneſs of kings.

But,

XVIII.

But, when ſome ſpoiler, ruſhing into light,
The bolts of pow'r tyrannically hurl'd,
And claim'd from heav'n hereditary right
To ſcourge the groaning nations of the world!

XIX.

When future kings, in one oppreſſive line,
On ev'ry human inſtitute had trod;
Nay, talk'd of rights preſcriptively divine,
To burſt the dreadeſt mandates of their God:

XX.

Then the mad licence of unbounded rule,
A *brand* of title to it's minions gave,
Stamp'd the *diſgrace* of honour on the fool,
The public robber, and the perjur'd ſlave.

The

XXI.

The bluſhleſs villain bore it, from the hour
He vilely ſold his country and his truſt:
The hackney'd ſtrumpet had it for her dower,
And reek'd a Ducheſs from the bed of luſt.

XXII.

Yet, for this breath of dignify'd diſgrace,
Did PULTNEY meanly pandar to a throne;
Nay, though it ſtunk upon a WALPOLE'S race,
Before it rankly feſter'd on his own.

XXIII.

Here ſee, ye meteors of a wondring ſtate!
Nor throw the moral ſentiment aſide,
How low, ambition can reduce the great,
And how the wiſeſt are debas'd by pride!

O did

XXIV.

O did a puff of title-giving wind
  Point out to man a more exalted goal,
Enlarge the ſmalleſt faculty of mind,
  Or raiſe the ſimpleſt excellence of ſoul:

XXV.

Did the loud herald's widely-ſwelling ſtrain,
  The pompous coat, or coronetted creſt,
Talk down the mad'ning anguiſh of a pain,
  Or huſh a riſing ſorrow in the breaſt:

XXVI.

Could this ennobling quality of kings
  Eternal rounds of happineſs beſtow;
Pluck out from guilt it's never-dying ſtings,
  And purge the midnight murderer to ſnow:

XXVII.

Then, e'en the baſeſt, poſſibly, might riſe,
The boaſt and wonder of applauding times;
And heav'n, which ſaw the greatneſs of the prize,
Look down, perhaps, in mercy on his crimes.

XXVIII.

But when we ſee, in pond'ring on the great,
The bloating glories of a monarch's breath
Can ſooth no adverſe circumſtance of fate,
Nor kindly ſteal a manacle on death,

XXIX.

When the long ſcene of tinſel has been clos'd,
Which through unnumber'd anceſtries has ran;
And left the mightieſt of the high expos'd
To all the various miſeries of man:

When

XXX.

When we behold him languidly oppreſs'd,
On death's pale couch, all ghaſtly and declin'd;
Or dragg'd before the godhead of his breaſt,
And damn'd to all the hells within his mind:

XXXI.

'Tis then th'intrinſic emptineſs of fame,
In all it's pomp of nothingneſs, ſhall riſe;
Teach wiſdom's cheek to redden at a name,
And virtue's brow to furrow and deſpiſe.

XXXII.

Titles! — what are ye, on your nobleſt ſtrings,
Howe'er the weak, or worthleſs, may revere?
Alas! the proudeſt epithet of kings
Ne'er ſtruck, like BARNARD, on a Britiſh ear!

Where

XXXIII.

Where inbred honour happily is given,
In vain the ſtream of dignity is ſhed;
And ſure 'tis treaſon at the bar of heaven
To pour a glory on a raſcal's head.

XXXIV.

See, low in earth, where PULTNEY's title lies,
That glittering gewgaw of a prince's nod:
While BARNARD holds a patent from the ſkies,
And ſoars a deathleſs nobleman with God!

XXXV.

Here thrones, enwrap'd in ſilence and amaze,
Shall ſhrink to look ſo wonderfully high;
And fame herſelf be furniſh'd with a gaze
To crack the ſtraining fibres of her eye.

XXXVI.

Hear, ye mad factions of the preſent race,
Who wildly rage with diſcord's dang'rous brand,
And call a ſhameleſs enmity for place
A gen'rous ſtruggle for your native land!

XXXVII.

But chiefly hear, ye celebrated few,
Who *nobly* ſicken at a country's groan,
And, acting *always* from the whiteſt view,
Have fought from honeſt principle alone!

XXXVIII.

Is there, who, glowing with a godlike pride,
For BARNARD's crown would emulouſly ſtart,
And ſpurn the farce of dignity aſide
To raiſe an empire on a nation's heart?

XXXIX.

Let ſtar-ey'd juſtice ever be his rule,
Which all of *ſelf* indignantly diſowns ;
And ſcorns as much to be a party's tool
As crouch the ſervile ſycophant of thrones.

XL.

'Tis not a blind ungovernable rage
At every act which miniſters avow,
That juſtly marks the ſaviour of an age,
Or binds a laurel round the patriot brow.

XLI.

The keeneſt ſcourge that ever ſmote theſe climes,
At ſome nice criſis for their welfare ſtood :
And oft the mere neceſſity of times
Has ſcar'd the ruthleſs tyrant into good —

Though

XLII.

Though hapleſs AFRIC at her fires exclaims
While mid-day ſuns their blazing circuit hold;
Yet the ſame orb that lights her into flames
Matures the latent mineral to gold.

XLIII.

The parching natives of the baleful ſhore
At eve's glad ſummons dart themſelves away,
And graſp, tranſported, at the dazzling ore,
Though ripen'd ſolely by the burning day:

XLIV.

Juſt ſo the patriot, of an honeſt zeal,
Swift as the light'ning vehemently wings,
And graſps each meaſure for the public weal,
Without once thinking from what ſource it ſprings.

XLV.

But why of patriots idly do I rave? —
My inmoſt ſoul the modern herd diſdains,
Where every boaſter has his turn of ſlave
And vilely bawds to ſhackle us in chains.

XLVI.

Loud as the leaders of our patriot band
The public ſhout of liberty may claim,
Yet baſe proſcription blackens every hand
And ſtabs a kingdom, to preſerve the GAME.

XLVII.

What boots the caſual vehemence of ſoul,
That ſwells the freeborn whirlwind to the ſkies,
Rings againſt GEN'RAL WARRANTS at the pole,
And chills the ſtars with curſes at EXCISE:

XLVIII.

If, while the cauſe of liberty they plead
Our very patriots infamouſly fall,
And ſtoop themſelves to conſecrate a deed
Which drags the wideſt ruin on us all?

XLIX.

What are the new-born ſuff'rings of the hour
If juſtice takes the balance in her hand,
To what the mean barbarity of pow'r
In brutal GAME-ACTS ſcatters round the land?

L.

Strip'd of his rights, the farmer ſeeks the ſhade,
Where ſilence kindly waits upon deſpair;
And mourns his ſacred liberties betray'd,
That pamper'd wealth may trifle with a hare.

LI.

To grief and rage alternately he yields,
Nor ſheds one grateful ſmile upon the morn ;
A gen'ral ravage waſtes his little fields,
And ſpeaks ſome purſe-proud ruffian of the horn.

LII.

Perhaps, a bleeding monument he ſtands,
To ſtrike his neighb'ring villagers with awe ;
And ſmarts, all ſcourg'd by LEGISLATIVE hands,
Who greatly club to ROB him of the LAW—

LIII.

But at our MINORS let him not exclaim,
Nor turn to heav'n his melancholy eyes :
A patriot, ſure, may murder for the GAME
Who damns a GEN'RAL WARRANT and EXCISE!

Weep

LIV.

Weep not, ye RUSSIAN vaſſals! at your ſtate,
Nor think your lot is ſingularly hard;
Though mark'd, through ſome ſeverity of fate,
A kind of pack-horſe to your caſual lord:

LV.

What, though beneath the everlaſting breeze,
With ſcarce a pittance of the meaneſt bread,
Through life's long round you miſerably freeze,
And none e'er find a ſhelter, but the dead:

LVI.

Yet fate, in all it's bitterneſs, was kind,
And ſhew'd ſome marks of tenderneſs and care;
Beſtow'd a bleſs'd unthinkingneſs of mind,
And gave a happy promptitude to bear.

LVII.

You can ſit naked in the beating rain,
E'en while the north wind violently roars;
And ſeem regardleſs while the bellowing main
In horror daſhes round your dreary ſhores:

LVIII.

You, at a nod, can proſtitute a wife,
Nor doubt the killing mandate to be juſt;
Can calmly kneel, and ſacrifice a life,
To lick the foot that tramples you in duſt. —

LIX.

But BRITONS, form'd of very diff'rent mould,
At ev'ry touch intuitively ſmart;
And, greatly juſt, as generouſly bold,
The ſmalleſt dagger pierces to the heart.

LX.

How then muſt BRITONS murmur at their fate,
If candid ſenſe decides upon the cauſe;
When ev'n the mere AMUSEMENTS of the great
Can ſtab the VITAL ESSENCE of our LAWS?

LXI.

When ev'n the hand of LEGISLATIVE rule,
Which once ſtood guardian at diſtreſs's door,
Extends the pow'r of ev'ry WEALTHY fool,
And nobly makes it GUILTY to be POOR?

LXII.

O for ſome curſe, executive as dread!
Hot, hiſſing inſtant, from the ſtarry throne,
To ſtrike the villain's execrable head,
That firſt deſtroy'd our TITLE to our OWN!

LXIII.

Will no kind thunder pity the diſtreſs'd,
And, big with judgment, mercifully roll,
To cruſh his *more* than PROSTITUTED breaſt;
To blaſt — his actual SODOMY of ſoul!

LXIV.

Ye patriot names! — But, why ſhould I perſiſt —
'Tis vain with pride or av'rice to contend —
Beſides, few BARNARDS beam upon the liſt,
And, all too like, may PULTNEY in the end.

LXV.

O PULTNEY! — But compariſon is pain,
Where BARNARD's name we mention as divine,
And fancy only aggravates the ſtain
Which BATH has thrown eternally on thine.

The

LXVI.

The praiſe of worlds, in echo to the ſpheres,
The patriot's brighteſt and his beſt reward;
And all that once could raviſh on our ears
Is now abſorb'd in infamy and LORD.

LXVII.

Yet let us teach the ages ſtill unborn
With ſome indulgence kindly to decide,
And think that fate has caſt thee out to ſcorn
To laſh each ſwelling arrogance of pride:

LXVIII.

Let us ſuppoſe thee graciouſly deſign'd
To give one moral leſſon to the ball;
And teach the proudeſt of the human kind
How ſoon the wiſeſt and the mightieſt fall.

Then

LXIX.

Then on the wing of widely ſpreading fame
Some tender mark of pity may be thrown;
And thoſe who bluſh the deepeſt at thy name,
Turn back, diſmay'd, and tremble for their own.

FINIS.